CLAIMS

Sub a1

1. A method of determining the subjective quality of an audio-visual stimulus, comprising the steps of:

measuring the actual synchronisation errors between the audio and visual elements of the stimulus,

identifying characteristics of audio and visual cues in the stimulus,

and generating a measure of subjective quality from said errors and characteristics.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the characteristics of the audio and visual cues are used to generate one or more synchronisation error tolerance values.

3. A method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the audio-visual stimulus is monitored for occurrences of synchronisation errors exceeding such tolerance values.

4. A method according to claim 3, wherein the means generating the stimulus is controlled to maintain the synchronisation in a predetermined relationship with the said tolerance values.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the resulting measure of subjective quality is used to control the operation of an avatar animation process.

6. Apparatus for determining the subjective quality of an audio-visual stimulus, comprising means for measuring the actual synchronisation errors between the audio and visual elements of the stimulus, means for the identification of characteristics of audio and visual cues in the stimulus, and means for generating a measure of subjective quality from said synchronisation errors and characteristics.

7. Apparatus according to claim 6, wherein the means for identifying cue characteristics generates one or more synchronisation error tolerance values.

8. Apparatus as claimed in claim 7, comprising means for monitoring the audio-visual stimulus for occurrences of synchronisation errors exceeding said tolerance values.

9. Apparatus according to claim 8, comprising means for controlling the means generating the stimulus to maintain the synchronisation in a predetermined relationship with the said tolerance values

10 Apparatus according to claim 9, further comprising animation process means controlled by the subjective quality measurement means to generate an animated image.